

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 04756 211931Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 MCT-01 SY-05 TRSE-00 /059 W
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O 211851Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6202

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 4756

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT HUMAN RIGHTS UPDATE

REF: A STATE 155078, B BUENOS AIRES 4734, C BUENOS
AIRES 4466, D BUENOS AIRES 4595

1. THE LATEST HUMAN RIGHTS ROUNDUP (BA 4734) PROVIDES
UPDATE TO JUNE 16 AS REQUESTED IN PARAGRAPH 2, REFTTEL
A.

2. ON THE THREE KEY ISSUES, REPORTED STATISTICS SHOW
THAT IN THE PERIOD SINCE THE NEWSOM VISIT MAY 23-25
THE NUMBER OF NEW DETAINEES UNDER PEN IS SOMEWHAT
REDUCED AND THE NUMBER OF PERSONS RELEASED OR
AUTHORIZED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY IS UP. SINCE MAY 21,
56 PERSONS HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN RELEASED, 25 HAVE
BEEN DETAINED, AND 11 HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED TO LEAVE
THE COUNTRY. THESE STATISTICS COMPARE FAVORABLY
WITH THOSE OF THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE YEAR. WE
INFORM FAMILIES ABOUT DISAPPEARANCE CASES OR
RESOLVE THEIR LEGAL STATUS BEYOND THOSE DESCRIBED
IN EARLIER CABLES, SUCH AS PHONE CALLS FROM THE
"DISAPPEAREDS" TO THEIR FAMILIES. NO NEW INSTI-
TUTIONAL METHODS HAVE BFIN ANNOUNCED TO PROVIDE
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SYSTEMATIC INFORMATION TO FAMILIES.

3. ON THE MATTER OF SECURITY FORCES CONDUCT AND
ABUSES, THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE WORLD
CUP MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO PINPOINT TRENDS. POLICE
AND MILITARY FORCES IN ARGENTINA HAVE BEEN UNDER
STRICT ORDERS TO AVOID REACTIONS OR INCIDENTS

WHICH WOULD GIVE FOREIGN VISITORS AND PRESS FUEL FOR CRITICIZING THE COUNTRY'S SECURITY PRACTICES. THIGHT CONTROLS HAVE BEEN PLACED ON THOSE ELEMENTS OF THE SECURITY FORCES RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES. AIDED BY THE FACT THAT TO DATE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES DURING THE WORLD CUP GAMES HAVE IN FACT BEEN MINOR AND VERY FEW, THE CONDUCT OF THE SECURITY FORCES HAS MUCH IMPROVED. THE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS HAVE SIGNALLED THAT IMPRESSION TO THE EMBASSY AND BY THE FREEDOM WITH WHICH THEY HOLD THEIR RALLIES AND MEET WITH FOREIGN NEWSMEN. SEE REF B.

4. HOWEVER, THE CURRENT LESS REPRESSIVE ATMOSPHERE SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS AN ABSOLUTE SIGN THAT OBJECTIVES HAVE CHANGED. THE SECURITY FORCES ARE STILL CHARGED WITH ERADICATING TERRORISM. (FOR EXAMPLE, IN AN INCIDENT BEFORE THE NEWSOM VISIT, TERRORISTS ON MAY 11 BOMBED THE SAN MARTIN CULTURAL CENTER KILLING TWO POLICEMEN AND INJURING A CHILD. SECURITY FORCES WITHIN A FEW DAYS REPORTEDLY ELIMINATED A GROUP OF PRT/ERP MEMBERS CONNECTED WITH THE BOMBING. SEE REFTEL D. SECRET NOFORN.)

5. WHAT DOES APPEAR TO BE HAPPENING IS GREATER CONTROL OVER THOSE RESONSIBLE FOR MIDNIGHT
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ABDUCTIONS AND RELATED EXCESSES, AND GREATER CARE IN TARGETING SUBVERSIVES AND CARRYING OUR OPERATIONS. AS REPORTED IN REF C, CONTROLS HAVE BEEN TIGHTENED BOTH ON MILITARY AND POLICE OPERATIVES. THE ARMY IS TRYING A NUMBER OF OFFICERS FOR ABUSING AUTHORITY IN CARRYING OUT OPERATIONS. THE FEDERAL POLICE HAS TAKEN ACTION AGAINST HUNDREDS OF POLICE FOUND GUILTY OF EXCESSES. HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE SPEAKING OUT PUBLICLY ON THE NEED TO TIGHTEN CONTROLS OF THE SECURITY FORCES.

6. COMMENT: THE PERIOD AFTER THE WORLD CUP WILL PERMIT US TO MAKE A MORE USEFUL ANALYSIS OF THE MEASURES TAKEN BY GOA TO CURB SECURITY FORCES' EXCESSES AND RESOLVE DETAINEE AND DISAPPEARANCE CASES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUENOS04756
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780259-0379
Format: TEL
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780637/aaaabfvq.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1494b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2270986
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS UPDATE
TAGS: SHUM, AR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1494b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014